

# BMHA Newsletter

BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA



Volume 4, Number 1

Jan/Feb/Mar 1993

## EDITOR'S COLUMN

### BMHA Members in the News

If you keep a close watch on the ham magazines and other publications you may have noticed:

>> *QST*, November '92, page 98. A photo and story about Tim Palanga, KD4WZ, and his 7,000-mile solo bike trek from Washington state to Florida, and how he made a special stop at ARRL headquarters in Newington, CT.

>> *WorldRadio*, December '92, page 22. A photo and reprint of the article titled "Hamming on the Open Road" by Russ Dwarshuis, KB8U. In this piece, which first appeared in the Oct. '91 issue of the BMHA Newsletter, Russ tells about his 3,000-mile summer bike trip, his adventures with operating CW while underway, and his solutions to electronic and mechanical problems.

>> *Badger State Smokey Signals*, November '92, page 9. Titled "QRP Bicycle-to-Bicycle QSO", this is an account of the possibly "Guinness record" bicycle-to-bicycle QRP 20-meter QSO between members Elroy Shelley, WB9GIE, in Wisconsin and Ned Mountain, WC4X, in Georgia. So that you can take in all the details, we plan to reprint this thrilling story in the next issue of the BMHA Newsletter.

>> *Milwaukee Magazine*, October '92, page 14. A photo and story on Elroy Shelley, WB9GIE, and his hobby of transmitting to brother hams from his ancient 3-speed Huffy.

### World-Record Bike Trek thru Africa

BMHA members Dan and Steve Buettner at this writing are leading a 5-man cycling expedition that started in November on a 10,000-mile trek that covers the length of Africa. (Note: we don't know their call signs because they got their licenses just before the trip.) The Africa Trek Cycling Expedition is headed by Dan Buettner, a famous endurance cyclist, who has cycled around the world through the Soviet Union and holds the record for biking from Alaska to Argentina. This will be an attempt at making a first-ever bike crossing of the African continent. The toughest part of the nine-month, 15-country expedition is expected to be the grueling two months they'll spend pedaling across the Sahara Desert.

Their communications setup: Every Tuesday at noon US Central time (2000 UTC), they'll make radio or telephone contact with Rens Faber, ZS6OP, of Boksburg, South Africa, who will then relay messages to their ham contacts here in the US. This will be on the 15-meter band at 21.390 MHz, which is a frequency used by missionaries to make contact and then

move to a nearby frequency. You readers are asked to monitor this weekly QSO and, if necessary, copy any messages that are not received by the statewide ham contacts. Any such messages should be telephoned collect to the Africa Trek coordinator, Jocelyn Hale, in Minneapolis (612) 349-6606. Our best wishes for a safe and successful journey to our fellow bike-hams Dan and Steve.

—Hansley Alley, NADA, Editor

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Dayton HamVention — April 23-25

The BMHA fourth annual Forum at the Dayton HamVention is set for Sunday, April 25th at 9:30 am. We're sticking right now for a larger more comfortable room than we had last year. Details will appear in the next issue — including info on the Forum program, extra eyeball meetings, and BMHA's secret simplex frequency. Put that wonderful weekend on your calendar — right now! —Ed.

### Second Annual BMHA Bike Tour

1992 witnessed the first BMHA bike tour to be held in conjunction with the Dayton HamVention (see the July '92 Newsletter). Those attending the ride had an enjoyable time, with planning for the Second Annual BMHA Bike Tour beginning soon afterwards. The date for this year's ride is Saturday April 24, 1993. Hams for the event are again Jim Gumbert, NCBY, and Ken Noffsinger, AEM.

Tentative plans call for both 10- and 30-mile rides on the roads in and around the Tipp City area, which is just 10 miles north of the home of HamVention, Dayton's Hara Arena. The longer route will pass through three Ohio counties and four VHF Century Club grid squares, so bring your transceivers — and of course we'll be communicating bicycle-mobile within the group as we pedal along. A picnic at the Tipp City Park will follow the ride.

Those interested in participating in the ride are asked to send a SASE (including a count of participants) by March 15 to Ken Noffsinger at 43 Kent Road, Tipp City, OH 45371. The SASE is important for forecasting facility and food requirements, as well as providing a convenient means to convey specific information (maps, talk-in frequency, etc.) to participants a few weeks before the ride. Any suggestions or questions concerning the ride are welcomed and may be enclosed with the SASE. Additional details will appear in the April '93 Newsletter.

—Jim Gumbert, NCBY  
Ken Noffsinger, AEM  
43 Kent Road  
Tipp City, OH 45371

# PUBLIC SERVICE

## *They Walked, I Pedaled*

*OK.....*

### *The Case of the Fragile Antenna*

The annual MS Walk is nearby Fitchburg, MA was fast approaching, and I was still experimenting with a J-pole design that I hoped to finish and bring with me on a later bicycle tour around Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard. The coordinator of the ham communications for the Walk, Charlie, WN1B, and I had talked about my various cycling activities many times before, including my bicycle mobiling. Here I saw a chance to once again participate in the communications for the Walk, and at the same time field-test my J-pole concept before my big trip. I offered my services and my bicycle, and both were accepted!

My J-pole was a very crude design that was not originally made to go on my bike. It was made from aluminum ground wire, cut the right length and fed at the proper point. I originally built it for shack use — just to teach myself how a J-pole works. However, it worked so well that I wanted to see if I could mount it as-is on my bike. With a little creative jury-rigging, I managed to mount it to my rear reflector bracket on my rack, and run the coax up to my handlebar bag, where my IC-2AT and speaker-mike would sit. I had taken a couple of test rides and had gotten favorable signal reports, but doing com for the Walk would be the real test. Normally I work into a repeater, but for the Walk we would just be using simplex. It would be a good test of its range.

The day of the Walk we tried to stuff the bike with the antenna in place into Charlie's car. I ended up having to bend it (that fragile aluminum wire!) to get it to fit. But I simply unbent it (gingerly) when we arrived at the starting line, and it worked okay. Diana, KC1SP, was net control, and she assigned me the tactical call of "Bike One". I liked it — kind of catchy. Being the only bike-mobile ham, my job would be to hang out with the main group of walkers, unless told to go somewhere else.

Before I got underway I waited until most of the walkers had left, and then I pedaled past them as they strung out along the street and sidewalk. After passing most of them I pulled over for a while to let them pass me. A few of them called out "Cheater!" As I pedaled by. I continued "leapfrogging" the main pack until I got to the first of three checkpoints, where I stopped and chatted with the hams stationed there. Naturally, they were all interested in my bicycle-mobile arrangement, and really liked my J-pole — both how it sounded on the air and the antenna itself.

Crunching some granny gears I headed up the big hill to checkpoint two, which was familiar to me, since I was stationed there last year with Bill, NZ1D, who was there again this year. I stopped to talk with him a bit, and to let some of the walkers go by. Diana called me, and she could not seem to hear me with the J-pole for some reason. I used Bill's rig to respond. Maybe there was some hill between us. I was surprised, though, since I was on top of one of the highest hills around — my legs would attest to that!

I missed the third checkpoint, going right past it the first time, since it was far back from the road. I knew I had



*The author at Checkpoint Three with soon-to-die antenna.*

gone too far when on my radio I heard the hams there yelling, "Hey, Bike One, where are you pedaling to in such a hurry!" I was paying so much attention to the car traffic that I missed the checkpoint. They also gave me very positive comments on the bike mobile system, and said that they heard me from all around the course just fine.

After posing for a picture for posterity I made my way back to the start/finish line, and stopped by Diana's minivan, the communications base. It had been a good hilly workout and I was hungry, so I went in for the complimentary lunch. (Considering some of those hills, it was by no means a free lunch!) I helped Diana with net control duties, and then she gave me a lift home. Again, I had to bend my J-pole to fit inside the car. Dying from mental fatigue, the aluminum ground wire broke the next day as I pulled into my high school's parking lot. But I had learned many things from that prototype antenna, and it served me well. I learned that a J-pole is the most practical antenna design for my purposes, and also what dimensions work well for me. And besides that I had a fun ride around the MS Walk route, and did some public service work at the same time! Rest assured, a second, stronger J-pole is currently in the planning stages.

—Justin Hughes, KA1ULT  
Box 5151  
North Adams State College  
North Adams, MA 1247

## FLASH!

Starting in January '93 the Mizuno line of HF HT radios and accessories will be imported and retailed by J-COM, POB 194, Ben Lomond, CA 95005. (408) 335-9120. Up to this point, Ned Mountain, WC4X, was importing them exclusively for our members — see Ned's articles on these amazing little radios in the April and October '92 issues of this newsletter. Look for J-COM's ads in the various ham magazines, and visit their booth at the Dayton Hamvention.

# BM's OLDEN DAYS

Editor,

I saw a recent copy of the BMHA Newsletter and noted that you ran a story asking for people to write in if they knew of anybody who operated bicycle-mobile before 1957. Well I'm your man!

I enclose a clipping (much faded!) of a story about me and my bicycle radio setup that came out in 1950 in the Holland, MI newspaper. In '50 I was a 17 year-old junior at Holland High, and as it said in the newspaper, it was believed that I had "the only two-way bicycle radio in the country". I was consumed by amateur radio, but the call of W8GCW...still have it, still on the air. But at age 58 I don't ride the bike any more.

I really don't remember what the radio gear was, other than it was WW-II army surplus, which operated on 10 and 6. This stuff was quite plentiful back in the 50's at a dollar a pound....perhaps less! It used an acorn tube in the final, 957 or something like that, and probably delivered a watt to the antenna.

The bike was a Roadmaster 26" with balloon tires and a luggage rack on the rear fender, which supported the power pack. Roadmaster had a neat shock support system on the front fork which made it convenient to mount the rig proper. Of course loaded antennas were not "the thing" back in the 50's, so I had to go with a 1/4 wave whip, which grazed overhanging tree branches as I pedaled back and forth to school. (I guess the tip of the antenna must have been around 11 feet off the ground.)

I was in 7th heaven. Worked California with a 5-9+ almost daily....and my 4th hour english teacher always excused my tardiness (this was after lunch hour) if I was working the rig. And being a ham beyond being a ham, I really enjoyed the publicity from all the newspaper articles.

I was a very active ham in those days, and continue to be, although now I enjoy the comfort of my Lincoln Continental mobile setup or the converted 3rd bedroom of my home, which has become the shack since the kids are gone.

It will be interesting to see if anyone else is able to challenge my "feat" and be the first to go on the air while bicycle-mobile.

—Chuck Rich, W8GCW  
363 Settlers Road  
Holland, MI 49423



Chuck Rich today in his shack in Holland, Michigan.



"If you should see a chap riding a bicycle with a nine-foot antenna and various boxes strapped fore and aft, it's only 17-year-old Chuck Rich experimenting with his two-way radio. Rich's bicycle radio is believed to be the only one of its kind in the country." -Holland MI newspaper, 1950.

## BMHA NET....ON 20

### Brrrr! It's Cold Outside

Is your weather like mine? It's cold! dreary! windy! Plus it's dark when I go to work and dark when I come home, all of which keeps me from riding my bike.

Fortunately, Santa came a few months early and brought one of those NordicTrack machines. Doesn't have any wheels but you can use your bicycle waterbottle bottle — you sweat a lot — and use your bicycle gloves. WOW, you sure can get a good workout on one of them. It better put me in good shape for the next cycling season. Hopefully it will eliminate some of that "ring around the ole waist" if I keep it up.

What I'm trying to say is that the cycling season is over for me, here in the great mid-American icebox. That means it's a good time to check in to the BMHA Net! Those warm-weather excuses are gone.

The BMHA Net still meets on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month at 0000 UTC. We meet on or about 14.253 +/- the QRM. Join us and share some of your experiences and meet the gang of good people who are crazy enough to be the bicycle-mobile hams of America. Happy holidays to all, and CU on the net.

—Mike Nickolaur, NP0N, BMHA Net Control  
316 E. 32nd St.  
S. Sioux City, NE 68776

# TRAVEL & ADVENTURE

## *I Love My Daily Commute!*

My two-wheeled commuting began as a transportation necessity while I did a major car repair. As it was June, and a way to get consistent exercise was needed, I seized the opportunity to resurrect a 1971 touring bike that had fallen into disuse (I always felt guilty about that bike sitting idle). After the car was fixed, biking to work was even more fun than done by choice.

Being a perverse sort, I saw the same challenge in refining a 2-M bicycle setup as I did in getting out -- my YL is Cathy, KA1QKD -- HF setup to work reasonably well -- 160-10 in a 3rd floor apartment. (The HF setup works so well I haven't modified it in a year.)

In retrospect it has been a process of continual refinement and modification, with both the bike and the 2-M setup. I still have some tweaking to do, but that's half the fun!

### The Daily Commute

We live about three and a half miles from my workplace and about seven from Cathy's, both in the same direction. The roads are heavily travelled at commuting times, and are in various states of repair. Since I'm on flexible work time, I usually ride over to her workplace at lunch and back. All told, this makes for about a 15-mile daily round trip.

Both the bike and the rig take a pounding on this daily commute and, of course, safety is of prime concern. In the refinement process, reliability and ease of operation were key criteria.

### The Rig

My current setup is as follows: HT clipped to belt that's thick enough to give it a good grip; speaker-mike threaded up through shirt and hanging 3" out of collar within easy reach of right hand; earphone or 1/2 stereo phones on right ear; duckie antenna for repeater and S/S wave for simplex.

The considerations that led me to this arrangement are:

1. HT in handlebar bag gets beat up, so put HT on belt.
2. Road noise dictates earphone use, because speaker-mike volume is too weak.
3. Earphone in right ear ok, because it does not interfere with hearing road traffic.
4. S/S wave ant has quick-disconnect coax setup from rig for convenience and to prevent breaking the BNC in the rig if I fall or am careless.
5. For water resistance, Yaesu HT has gaskets around knob shafts and membrane in front of speaker.
6. Internal VOX on rig not useful as it will key from road noise even on least sensitive setting -- and, worse still, VOX would open when I yell FCC-forbidden words at drivers who brush me too close.

In the future I plan to get a boom mike that I can key from the handlebars, similar to what KF6NC described in the last BMHA newsletter -- of course now I have to stop transmitting when I need both hands on the handlebars.

### The Bike

The new bikes are getting more tempting all the time, but I really like my 21-year-old Austrian touring bike. It is noticeably heavier than the "1993 models", but foot-pounds expended are aerobic points that I can use. (Also I would hate to think of how many dollars per pound of weight reduction I would have to spend to replace my 30 lb. antique.) In addition I harbor the belief that those steel rims will survive a pothole that would deform alloy rims. A rear carrier and panniers are required to carry work clothes, thermos, snacks, etc. Oversize brake pads were worth the \$10 a set. Regular (not lightweight) tires got fewer flats on glass-strewn roads, and the anti-leak goop that goes inside of the tube is a necessity. Using that stuff I almost never get flats. It works.

### Safety

This subject warrants its own section, and in a daily-use situation, it makes sense to stack the best odds to keep your number from coming up. A HELMET IS A NECESSITY! I know of two bicycle commuters who are now sadly dead. Neither wore a helmet and both died of head injuries. I never ride without it. EYEGLASSES keep insects, dirt, and cold air out the eyes, and make a nice mounting place for those nifty Third Eye rear-view mirrors, which take some getting used to, but then become indispensable. LED STROBE LIGHTS, front and rear, are tens or hundreds of times more visible than just lights or reflectors. The human eye is vastly more sensitive to changing states or motion than it is to steady states. I just added the front strobe after my headlight was not seen by a truck turning into me. LIGHT-COLORED CLOTHING could save your life if you fall in the dark. REFLECTIVE TAPE on the rim tops, pedals, crank arms, forks, and frame really stands out. Again you are capitalizing on the fact that the human eye and nervous system is highly sensitive to motion.

Commuting by bicycle is health-giving, economical, non-polluting, sometimes exciting, but never dull. I love it.

—Glenn Thalheimer, N1GMB  
26 Kenmar Dr. #257  
Billerica, MA 01821

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## CONTACT

*This is the 'I-need-help' department of the Newsletter, the object being to establish a clearing house where our readers can exchange information on a one-on-one basis. Send in your request -- we'll run it.*

I'm looking for companions to join me in cycling to this year's Dayton HamVention, which is set for the weekend of April 23-25. We'll leave Ann Arbor, MI, on the Monday or Tuesday before the event. It's about a 160-mile, 2 or 3-day trip, depending on the wind and weather. With April's blossoms and Ohio's nicely paved backroads, it should be a very pleasant trip. Call or write me soon and we'll work out the details.

—Russ Dwarshuis, KB8U (313) 747-8391  
427 Barber  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103



# LETTERS

Dear Hartley,

Got a big kick out of the cover picture on the July issue of the NewsLetter — the one that shows us at the start of the 1st Annual BMHA Rally Ride. It should have been called the Underwater Rally Ride! Maybe the sun will shine on us at Dayton next April.

My 1992 effort in the Michigan National 24 Hour Challenge wasn't so hot. I twisted my right knee at check point #3 — 93 miles — and it got so sore that I dropped out after 139 miles. Next year I will take another shot at that 300 mile mark.

The MS-150 in June proved to be a very nice ride. I carried my HT and used a 5/8 wave antenna mounted on the rear rack. Quite a few people on the ride commented about how impressed they were with the sagwagon information that was being passed on the net.

Every time I came back to my bike from making a trip to the outhouse there was a crowd gathered around my bike *listening to my handlebar bag (HIB)* as it gave out information about the sags, where the front of the group was, and how far back the stragglers were. Of course I took the opportunity to describe Amateur Radio and explain how easy it is to get a license.

Best wishes and I'll see you at the Dayton HamVention in the spring.

—Gale Scholten, N8AVQ  
8530 Peach Ridge NW  
Sparta, MI 49345

PS. I thought you might like to see a picture of a set of your Touring Cyclist Panniers in action here in Michigan. These belong to Norm Sevnsama of Grand Rapids, MI, who really likes his long, solo rides. What you see in the picture is all that he carries on a 2 or 3 day ride. This picture was taken on the first day of an overnighter, just a day after Norm had just completed a 720-mile, 7-day ride in Wisconsin.



From 1970 to '84 your olive tree company in Boulder called The Touring Cyclist Shop. Among other things, we designed and manufactured bicycle touring bags, which were sold by mail order to thousands of cyclists in the states and abroad. I'm very proud to see that our TC Panniers are still going strong eight years after we closed the business and retired. —Ed

## BMHA NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: Hartley Alley, NAOA

### BOARD OF ADVISORS:

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We welcome articles, suggestions, letters, announcements, photos, artwork — anything pertaining to bicycling while operating an amateur radio, or vice versa.

Submitted material will be edited for clarity and, if necessary, shortened to fit space constraints. Material should be submitted before Mar 1, June 1, Sept 1, or Dec 1 for inclusion in the ensuing issue.

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BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA (BMHA)  
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## ABOUT BMHA

### For the information of our first-time readers.

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America got its start when a "Stray" in the June '89 QST magazine asked to "get in touch with hams who operate their radios while bicycle-mobile, or while in any other human-powered conveyance", signed by Hartley Alley, NAOA. Twenty five hams responded, filled out questionnaires, and received a summary of the collected data.

In April of '90 we had our first BMHA Forum at the Dayton HamVention. We played in a packed house, overflowed the room, and added 54 names to our mailing list. Our '91 and '92 forums were again well-attended, and now BMHA is established as a "regular" at this world-renowned event.

This is the tenth issue of our quarterly newsletter, which has become the clearing house for the exchange of info and ideas for the hams who go on the air from their bicycles. Since the last issue of this newsletter we have added over 25 new members. The total paid membership now stands at 220, with members in 36 states, and four countries.

BMHA membership includes: bi-weekly net on 20 meters, annual meeting and Forum at the Dayton HamVention, membership directory, packet list, and the BMHA NewsLetter, which has articles on bike trips, antennas, other gear, operating tips, etc. The membership application blank is on the next to last page.

# ANTENNAS

## Low-Cost Multi-Band Antenna for HF

For the past year I have been experimenting with various types of HF antennas on the bike. My present favorite is the modified Ham Stick, a commercially available single-band helically wound whip about 8 foot tall. Even if you are only interested in a single band, this antenna is hard to beat, especially for the cost — under 20 bucks! This antenna really gets out. Today at lunchtime I worked France — from the bike!

The only difference between the Ham Sticks for the various bands is the number of turns on the loading coil. If you desire multi-band operation, it is possible to tap the coil for the frequencies of interest. The method for doing this is purely empirical, and it requires a lot of time — and a lot of beer.

Start with a 75 meter Ham Stick, because it contains the most wire. In brief, you wind the coil until it's resonant lower than the desired frequency, and then you remove about 1/2 turn at a time until it's resonant at the desired frequency. You solder a banana jack at that point, and keep winding for the next band.

My present multiband Ham Stick is tapped for 40, 20, 17, and 15 meters — I carry in my handlebar bag separate Mizuho radials for each of these bands. The banana plug arrangement makes changing bands a snap, a maneuver which I have been known to do while pedaling — but this is very unsafe, very stupid, and not recommended! By placing a big plastic flag on the very top (about ten feet off the ground) of the Hamstick I've made it serve double duty as a very visible and effective safety flagpole.

### Step-by-step Directions

1. Purchase a 75 meter Ham Stick antenna at a hamfest or order direct from Lakoview Company (see ads in CQ) 3620-9A Whitehall Rd, Anderson SC 29624, Phone 1-800-226-6990.

The part number is 9175, price is \$17.95, plus \$4.75 S&H. This antenna will have more than enough wire to construct a multi-band Ham Stick for 15 through 40 meters.

2. Carefully remove the heat shrink and throw it away. Carefully remove all of the wire and save it.

3. You will be removing and installing the top whip section many times during this project. So be sure to always get it back at the EXACT same dimension (43 1/2" — mark it with tape) and do not lose those little set screws!

4. Wind the bottom section on the antenna first. This is the section from the very bottom to the point where the 40 meter tap will be. This is a loosely wound section, and the exact number of turns or spacing is not critical. Tape the wire tightly at this point, and strip the insulation.

5. Make a temporary jumper to go from this point in a loosely-wound meander to the eventual point where the 15M tap will be. (Approximately 2 turns with 13" of hookup wire.)

6. Referring to the drawing, tape the top of the coil where you start winding, and deliberately overwind the 15 meter section by 1/4 inch or so. Wrap tape at this point, and cut the wire. Carefully scrape the insulation from the wire at this point. Loosely wind the jumper wire about 2 turns from the bottom and connect it to the 15M tap position. BE SURE TO WIND ALL COILS IN THE SAME DIRECTION!

7. Now for the creative part...! Attach the antenna to your bike... (The following steps are best done out of sight of wife, neighbors, etc. as it looks a little strange.)

The ideal device for this job is an MFI SWR analyzer. Try to borrow one. DO NOT connect to your HF station in the house or in the car — the results will NOT be the same. I tried it!

8. Measure the SWR. The antenna should be resonant lower than the phone portion of 15M. For optimum accuracy, measure while on the bike and pedaling — a step sure to amuse your neighbors!

9. Remove one turn at a time and reconnect the jumper and remeasure until the SWR is lowest at the desired frequency. This is the most tedious part of the job, but the most important. Once satisfied with the 15M tap, tightly tape the entire 15M section. Solder the beginning of the next section and begin to wind it.

10. Install a banana jack (Radio Shack #274-725) for the 15M tap and angle it downward.

11. Overwind the 17M section and repeat step 9. The lower in frequency you go, the more important it is to get on the bike while measuring, as that big bag of salt water — your body! — becomes a significant part of the radiating system.

12. Keep repeating this until you have all windings and banana jacks installed.

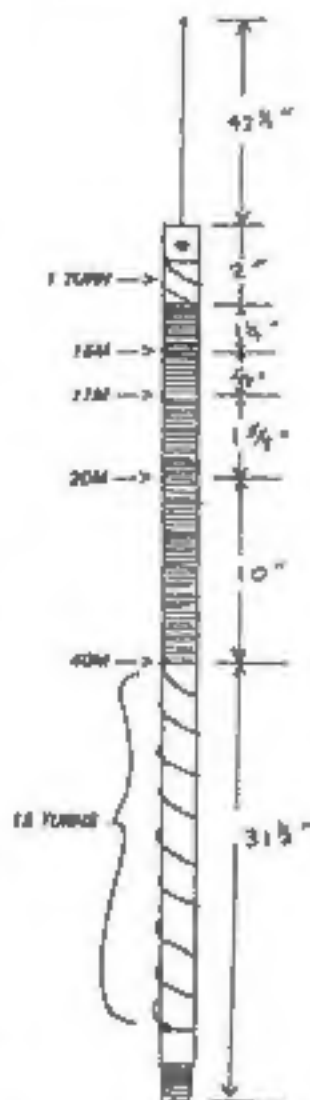
13. Double-check the SWR on all bands after you have all taps installed.

14. Carefully apply electrical tape to the entire antenna. The red tape from Radio Shack looks really good. (Use white tape, if you want the antenna to show up in most photographic situations. —Ed.)

You can also encase the entire thing in heat shrink if desired. If you do, be careful not to change any of the winding/banana plug geometry.

I have been using this antenna for about 9 months now, and find it as good as anything tried to date. By the way, the same concept can be applied to make a low-cost multi-band HF mobile antenna for your car and it really works well. What you end up with is a "poor man's Outbacker."

—Ned Mountain, WC4X  
185 Carriage Station Circle  
Rarwell, GA 30075



#### NOTES:

1. NOT TO SCALE!
2. ALL SECTIONS WOUND VERY TIGHT EXCEPT TOP AND BOTTOM

MM 12/92

# GEAR

## Two Hams -- Two Bands -- One Bike

A bike thief forced our hand, but it was my 14 year-old son's idea to get a tandem bike to replace his stolen "single" bike and thus improve communications between us on long rides. Randy, N6WMC, picked out the tandem, a 21-speed touring model from Bike Nubbar, and added a cyclocomputer for each position.

For some reason I was under the delusion that I wouldn't have enough to do steering, shifting and braking over 300 pounds of live load -- so why not add ham radio? If you need any further thoughts of just how far off base I was, just ask my wife Suzie (KC6TDW) for her description of the first ride. I think she still can vividly recount the parked cars jumping in front of our path as we gamely tried to balance the bike and steer, while noting that it might have been a very good idea to tighten down the rear handlebars BEFORE venturing out into the street. In another year or two she may be able to get through the story without exploding into laughter.

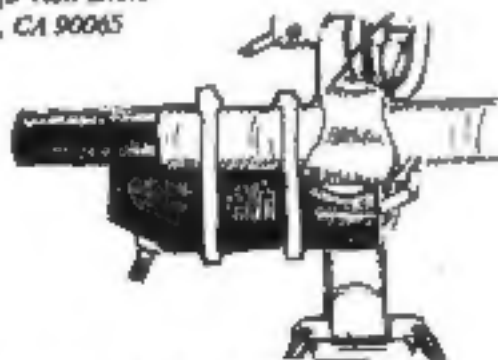
The details. We set up push-to-talk buttons on each of our handlebars, running the wires to the HT nestled in a small frame bag just in front of the stoker's (rear) seat. Randy, the stoker, is able to take the HT (dual-band Yaesu FT-470) out of the frame bag to change channels or use an autopatch while we are riding. The PTT buttons and the carphone wiring is in parallel -- none goes to each rider and attaches to a converted Unet lightweight telephone headset attached to the bike helmets, for hands-free operation.

The antenna is a Keewood dual-band MA-4000A attached to a metal bracket securely grounded to the rear rack for a reasonable ground plane.

We have taken this rig on a century ride as well as a 329-mile five-day excursion. For the longer trips we replace the internal battery with a 12 volt, 5 ampere-hour lead acid battery. This gives a full day of talking and listening although the weight is a little much for the shorter jaunts. Most other riders assume that the headset is just an intercom, but they are intrigued to find out it is ham radio.

I would like to hear from anyone else who is riding a tandem with ham radio. I will reply to all messages sent to my packet address (the mail works too!): WA6PRB @ K6VE.#SOCA.USA.NA.

—Mike Wilkinson, WA6PRB  
3947 Verdugo View Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90065



Push-to-talk button rigged under handlebar.



Captain and crew ready to go tandem-mobiling.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### BICYCLE MOBILE HAMS OF AMERICA (BMHA)

Please complete and return to:

BMHA, Box 4009, Boulder, CO 80306

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Call \_\_\_\_\_ License Class \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Individual: \$10 per year \_\_\_\_\_ Family: \$15 \_\_\_\_\_ Foreign: \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

(US or CAN)

(Pay by check in US dollars or international money order)

(Make check payable to BMHA)

(check one) New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## QSL CORNER

*In this space we feature QSL cards that have a bicycle-mobile motif. Send yours in. We'll run it.*



**KB8U**

Russell Dwarshuis  
427 Barber  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

## BMHA NEWSLETTER

ISSUED 2X

Bicycle Mobile Hams of America  
PO Box 4009  
Boulder, CO 80306

*Address Correction Requested*

**First Class Mail**

## NEW MEMBERS

*We're pleased to add these names to our Membership List:*

Salvador Acosta-Guerra, POB 5273, Aguadilla PR 00605-5273  
Craig Adams, KD6E9GJ, 15090 2nd Street Dr, San Jose CA 95134  
Kevin Anderson, 59 Ross Pl, Channahon IL 60514  
Jack Apple, MOOTY, 872 Mansfield Dr, Fort Collins CO 80525  
Raymond V Bishop, KP0YQ, 113 E. Rhonda #43, Ankeny IA 50009  
David M Black, WB3KCL, 20-R Ridge Rd, Greenbelt MD 20770  
Ron Bonquet, KD4LYM, 111 Seniors Mill Lane, Durham NC 27713  
Philip L Brown, WB7A, 760 Rosal Ct, Zionsville IN 46077  
Joel Coloma, N3ED1, 49 Park Av, Harrison, NY 10528  
Michael Eicholtz, N1NTV, 9677 Daisy Lane, Dexter MI 48130

Brian Fields, N9Q8Q, 22105 Austin Rd, South Bend IN 46628  
Dick Fradenburg, KM46K, 104 Castle Manor Ct, Garner NC 27529  
Dave Garbig, WB9MZZ, 3504 Trewant Way, Bloomington IN 47401  
Lee Green, MD, KP8MO, 9677 Daisy Lane, Dexter MI 48130  
Scott F Hoyer, KE0YQ, 5330 Winton, St Louis MO 63109  
Melanie Kruttschnitt, KD6KCS, 1971 Dogwood Dr, Santa Rosa CA 95403  
Steve Krumm, KD6KCT, 1971 Dogwood Dr, Santa Rosa CA 95403  
Richard G Loebke, 1440 Highland View Ct, Los Altos CA 94024  
Bernard Malone III, 8486 Jackson Sq Pl, Shreveport LA 71115  
Jim Meyer, 600 West Main St, Louisville KY 40202

Ken Nollert, KOEN, POB 23, Rochester, MN 55903  
Richard O Poirier, KA0NYQ, 527 Tyler St #B, Topeka KS 66603  
Frank Powell, KD6LNE, 2324 Holden Ct, Oceans CA 93443  
Peter Richards, 470 University Av, Boulder CO 80302  
Kandy Stout, KP0MF, 1801 Meadowside Dr, Fort Collins CO 80525  
Gene Talor, KB7QJ, 2578 N 2000 W, Fort West UT 84404  
Tony Wallace, VE1TNW, 196 Homewood, Hamilton ON L8P 2M5 CAN  
Bob Wale, AA5PD, 1808 Julian, Houston TX 77009

*With traditional ham friendliness, make contact  
with these new members, welcome them to BMHA,  
and help them with any problems they might have.*